



**Written Testimony of  
Sharon M. Palmer, Commissioner  
Department of Labor  
Labor and Public Employees Committee  
February 17, 2015**

Good Day Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang and Representative Rutigliano and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding **Proposed S.B. No. 81 AN ACT CONCERNING JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES**. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Labor Commissioner.

I am not in support of this proposed bill. The proposed ratio in the proposed bill will diminish the effective training of apprentices in the field and create a higher safety risk for the apprentices.

There is an allowance for a contractor to apply for Ratio Relief from our office. At the end of calendar year (CY) 2014 there were 1,538 employer sponsors with a 5,122 apprentices in total. Of these sponsors, 5% (74 of the 1,538) applied for ratio relief. In CY 2014, 74 companies made 84 separate applications for ratio relief. Of these 84 applications 56 received full approval, 24 received partial approval, and 4 applications were denied. This is a 95% approval rate for full or partial ratio relief. 3.7% percent (187 of 5,122) of registered apprentices were added by ratio relief.

The ratio relief applications are reviewed to ensure that journeyworker lists are accurate and if the sponsor applicant has any violations of OSHA or Wage Standards. Apprentice completion rates and termination rates of the applicant are also taken into consideration. A determination is then made whether to approve the request for ratio relief, in full or part, or to deny the application using this information.

I believe that use of the ratio relief application process already in place ensures that an apprentice is in a work environment that is conducive to craft training and safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input concerning this proposed bill.